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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
U. S. Department of Agriculture

Reserve

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

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Issue #22
October 17, 1975

USDA APPROPRIATIONS BILL AT WHITE HOUSE AWAITING PRESIDENTIAL ACTION.....
President Ford has until midnight, October 21, 1975 to approve or veto the bill. (Contact: Amos Martinez, OMF, ext. 73671)

USDA CANCELS MAJOR ADP PROCUREMENT.....The Congress, in adopting the Conferee report on the USDA Agricultural Appropriations Bill, established a ceiling of \$37M on the Department's Working Capital Fund. Although funding for new computer equipment was not explicitly denied, the limited operating base significantly affected the decision to enter into any major computer equipment procurement. Therefore, with great reluctance, the Department has requested that GSA cancel its major ADP procurement. (Contact: Henry Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

USDA'S SHARED ADP NETWORK MODIFIED.....The shared wideband network has been reconfigured and the line speed lowered from 50 kilobits per second to 19.2 kilobits per second. This has reduced the individual line capacity but allows for installing redundant circuits when required at less cost because of line contention. The network has also been expanded to inter-connect with the Fort Collins Computer Center and the remote workstation of FNS located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. All reconfiguration activities took place smoothly while agency remote workloads were continuously supported. Presently, four computer centers -- WCC, NOCC, KCCC and FCCC -- are now accessible from selected remote workstations via the shared network. (Contact: Vic Muller, ADS, ext. 77823)

DATES FOR IMPLEMENTING USDA'S PURCHASE ORDER PAYMENT SYSTEM AND TRAINING AGENCY PERSONNEL ARE SCHEDULED.....

<u>AGENCIES</u>	<u>IMPLEMENTATION TARGET DATE</u>	<u>TRAINING SESSION COMMENCEMENT DATE</u>
SARS Serviced Agencies	02/01/76	11/03/75
ARS	03/01/76	Around 01/03/76
All Other USDA Agencies	05/01/76	To be scheduled later

Adherence to the above schedule by NFC depends upon the success of each phase of implementation. The November 3rd training session will be held in Washington, D.C. and the group being trained will be divided into two separate 3-day sessions held over a two week period. Dates for the remaining training sessions are tentative or will be developed later. See page 3 of issue #16 for more details. (Contact: Dennis Boyd, NFC)

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTORS CONFER IN GETTYSBURG OCTOBER 8-10.....

Agency Directors of Administrative Services met with Office of Operations staff to discuss developments of common concern, identify problem areas, evaluate priorities, and set objectives. Assistant Secretary Wright and Deputy Assistant Secretary Bolduc gave opening addresses. Priority areas designated for follow-up include Administrative Services technical training and career development, energy conservation, information systems, intra-Departmental communications, revision of regulations. OO, in consultation with Agency representatives, will establish specific objectives and timetables. A follow-up meeting in Washington will be scheduled in November. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

APHIS GRADUATES 118 EXECUTIVE TRAINEES.....The first class of executive development trainees was graduated on September 12, 1975, as a culmination of an intensive 2-year program. The graduation activity concluded a 3-day Executive Development Conference at the Charter House in Alexandria, Virginia. Assistant Secretary Richard Feltner, Joseph Damico, Director of Executive Manpower, CSC, Dr. Saul Gellerman, Management Consultant, and Sy Pranger, Director of Personnel, addressed the APHIS group. (Contact: Jack Carson, APHIS, ext. 75213.)

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES, ETHICS AND CONDUCT.....As a result of OI investigations of recent incidents involving unethical conduct of some USDA employees, Secretary Butz directed the establishment of an interagency task force to develop a comprehensive program to help achieve and sustain the highest standards of employee ethics and conduct. The Task Force (which included representatives from FmHA, OI, FS, AMS, and APHIS) developed an action plan that includes required executive actions, training for all USDA employees, and the review and/or rewrite of guidelines, regulations and laws. Agencies have been directed to conduct training programs for employees beginning in December 1975, with the first phase to be completed by June 30, 1976. The training program will cover all aspects of employee conduct and ethics. Of particular concern, however, is employee acceptance of gratuities and favors. As a USDA employee, you:

CAN

- ... accept usual social courtesies in an obvious family or personal relationship when circumstances make it clear that it is those relationships rather than the business of the "interested party"^{1/} which are the motivating factors.
- ... accept unsolicited advertising or promotional material of nominal or trifling value.

CANNOT

- ... accept any gifts, gratuities, favors, entertainment, loan, unusual discount, special consideration or anything of monetary value from any "interested party"^{1/}
- ... accept honorariums for written articles, speaking engagements, or addresses on radio or television or other appearances performed as part of your official duties..

^{1/} Defined in paragraph 0.735-12 of Appendix I to the Employees Handbook.

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE DIVISION GETS JOB COMMITMENTS FOR MINORITIES AND WOMEN...

During Fiscal 1973, 1974 and 1975, the Contract Compliance Division, OEO, conducted 1,917 compliance reviews in regard to Equal Employment Opportunity at Government contractor establishments. As a result of those reviews, the contractors established affirmative action programs calling for the hire and or promotion of 36,391 minorities and women, for an average of 19 hires/promotions per review. The yearly figures follow:

	FY 1973	FY 1974	FY 1975	FY 1976
Reviews accomplished	760	629	528	600
Hires and/or promotions	12,454	11,171	12,766	16,200
(Per Review)	(16)	(18)	(24)	(27)

*Figures for FY 1976 are estimates only.
(Contact: Martin Osias, OEO, ext. 74224)

DID YOU KNOW THAT FOREST SERVICE HAS:

- ... Enrolled 3,155 teenagers last year in the Youth Conservation Corps program with a value of resource work in the amount of \$2,456,000?
- ... Trained 6,500 Job Corpsmen last year and placed 92 percent of them in jobs after graduation?
- ... Assisted 9,000 persons in low employment areas last year (under the auspices of other gainful employment programs)?
- ... Recorded 193 million visitor-days in recreation visits last year?
- ... In 1974 grazed 2,900,000 cattle, horses and sheep?
- ... Worked on 757 small watershed projects, under PL 566, last year?
- ... Last year helped develop 315 sawmill improvement programs that can result in a potential 36 percent increase in lumber output from these mills?
- ... Planted 322,500 acres to trees throughout the National Forest System?
- ... Is currently managing 11.6 million acres in the National Wilderness Preservation System?
- ... Today manages 93 percent of the National Wilderness Preservation System?
- ... Last year conducted 4,100 research studies and published 1,376 research publications?
- ... Provided fire protection and control on the 187 million acres of the National Forest System, as well as 23 million acres of associated lands in 1974?
- ... In 1975 returned to 39 States and Puerto Rico more than \$88 million as their shares of over \$360 million returned to the U.S. Treasury from sale and use of National Forest products and services?
- ... Since 1905 has returned \$1.2 billion to the States, and \$4.1 billion to the U.S. Treasury?
- ... Last year prepared and filed with CEQ 131 draft and 106 final Environmental Impact Statements--a total of 237?
- ... Provided 10.5 million board feet of sawtimber, or 21 percent, of the Nation's total harvest for 1974?

REPRESENTATIVE TOM FOLEY INTRODUCED A USDA PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE SEVERAL USDA MANAGEMENT POSITIONS.....The October 9 proposal contained language to upgrade the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture to Deputy Secretary of Agriculture at Executive Level IV; to raise the position of Administrator, APHIS, from GS-18 to Executive Level V; and increase the membership of the CCC board from six to seven. (Contact: Al Duran, OMF, ext. 74654)

OI HAS HANDLED OVER 500 ITEMS IN THEIR ROLE AS COORDINATOR FOR GRAIN INFORMATION REQUESTS.....Congressional committees and GAO were given information on the entire grain inspection process, the names of the licensed grain inspectors and agencies, 60 investigative reports relating to grain matters, details of current investigations, and many other items. The Surveys and Investigations Staff of the House Appropriations Committee, a frequent requestor, planned to submit its report on the grain inspection system to the Committee by October 15. (Contact: L.L. Free, OI, ext. 76915)

HIGHLIGHTS OF OCTOBER 16 COUNCIL MEETING.....

The Council made several recommendations about USDA's participation in the Bicentennial Exposition on Science and Technology which will be held next year from June through September in Cape Canaveral, Florida. Mr. Bolduc will report back at a later date.

Sy Pranger, OP, discussed employee ethics and conduct program in USDA emphasizing that USDA is serious about the program and will follow up on training, employee awareness and conflicts of interest uncovered by routine audits. (See page 2)

Sam Waters, NAL, presented the automated CAIN-ON-LINE information retrieval system. NAL is presently re-evaluating overall coordination, cost effectiveness, etc. of library services in USDA.

Ray Long, ADS, reminded the Council about the ADP conference that will be held at the Dulles Marriot Hotel on November 6 and 7. The purpose of the conference is to convey information on technological changes and management techniques to the Departments senior ADP managers (see Highlights from Issue 20).

Mr. Bolduc announced that the OA-OI conference is tentatively scheduled at the Annapolis Hilton Inn on December, 3-5, 1975. OA-OI will explain their work - office philosophy, audits and investigations, reporting, actions on reports, etc. - with special attention given to matters of concern raised by Agencies.

Ray Long, ADS, also distributed short biographies for the current nominees for the Executive Board of REP. The election will be held on Tuesday, October 21 and agencies may nominate members for the REP group if the nominee's names are submitted before the election.